Demand for data protection expertise in Singapore in 2019 reaches record levels

Available job positions increase by 32% year on year; exceeds available job positions in cybersecurity by up to 3X amidst highly publicised breaches and enforcements

Singapore, 18 October, 2019 – Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Centre , the education and research arm of Straits Interactive today announced the findings of the annual job survey conducted by the of demand for data protection expertise in Singapore. A record number of 119 job positions for data protection officers (DPOs) or job positions requiring relevant data protection expertise were advertised in the month of July 2019. This is a 32% increase over a similar period in 2018. This number exceeds available cybersecurity job positions in July 2019 by up to three times (reference Appendix, Image 1).

The job survey was conducted by viewing common job portals such as Indeed, LinkedIn, Careers@Gov and Monster amongst others (reference Appendix, Image 2). The increased demand was driven mainly by the government, which accounted for 34% of the overall job vacancies advertised. This was followed by sectors in health, information technology and financial services which combined, accounted for 39% of the available job positions (reference Appendix, Image 3). Of the 119 available jobs posted, 50% of these positions specifically involved performing the role of a data protection officer (reference Appendix, Image 4). Under the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), all organisations are required to appoint a data protection officer. There are similar DPO requirements in the Data Protection Act in the Philippines, and in the recently passed Personal Data Protection Act in Thailand.

Said Kevin Shepherdson, CEO of Straits Interactive and Head of the DPEX Centre, "The record number of data protection-related job positions available suggests that both private and public organisations are realising the importance of putting together measures to safeguard personal data in their care, as part of compliance with data protection requirements. These numbers constitute a single month's data and are gathered from online job portals. If we compute this on a yearly basis, along with job referrals and positions advertised in traditional publications, we are on track to hit the forecast we had made back in 2017 that Singapore would need a minimum of 10,000 Data Protection Professionals by 2020.",

Other findings from the survey reveal that a large majority of the advertised job vacancies are for executive and managerial positions, compared to a larger demand for AVP/VP/Director positions in 2018 (reference Appendix, Image 5). The two largest departments hiring data protection expertise include information technology/information security department (44.5%) and the legal and compliance (35.3%) department (reference Appendix, Image 6).

The PDPC unveiled in July 2019 the DPO Competency Framework and Training Roadmap (framework). The framework provides clarity on the core competencies and proficiency levels a data protection officer requires.

Anticipating a shortage of competent data protection officers needed in the market, Straits Interactive and SMU Academy teamed up to offer a data protection curriculum in July last year. The latter introduced two advanced certificates (consisting of 11 modules) leading to an advanced diploma in data protection, the first in the region.

More information about DPEX Centre can be found at www.dpexcentre.com while that of Straits Interactive can be found at www.straitsinteractive.com

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About the DPEX Network

The Data Protection Excellence (DPEX) Network is the first of its kind facility in the ASEAN region whose aim is to provide leadership, best practices, training, research and support for all things surround data privacy from an operational perspective. This collaboration of partnerships comprise certification bodies, law firms, universities and organisations who provide professional services and technologies relating to data privacy. An ever-growing network, members currently include Straits Interactive, Singapore Management University, International Islamic University of Malaysia, De LaSelle University, Philippines, IAPP, EXIN, OCEG and Lexxion amongst others. More information about DPEX Network can be found at www.dpexcentre.com

About Straits Interactive

Straits Interactive delivers end-to-end governance, risk and compliance solutions that enable trusted business and responsible marketing, especially in the area of data privacy and protection. Recently voted one of the Top 25 Compliance Solutions Providers in the Asia Pacific by Asia Pacific CIO Outlook magazine, we help businesses achieve operational compliance and manage risks through a combination of cloud technology and professional services. Our software-as-a-service solutions include DPOinBox and Governance, Risk & Compliance System (GRACIAs), all of which are supported by professional services that include advisory services, audits, and training. More information about the company can be found on www.straitsinteractive.com.

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APPENDIX

### 1) Number of Job Positions from 2016 to 2019

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
No. of Positions	42	85	90	119
Increase		43	5	29
Change in % yearly		102.4%	5.9%	32.2%

Ratio:

Data Protection	Cybersecurity
119	39
3	1

A record number of 119 job positions for data protection officers (DPOs) or job positions requiring relevant data protection expertise were advertised in the month of July 2019. This is a 32% increase over a similar period in 2018 (90 job positions vs 119 job positions). This number also exceeds available cybersecurity job positions in July 2019 by up to three times.

2) Distribution of Job Positions by Job Portal in 2019
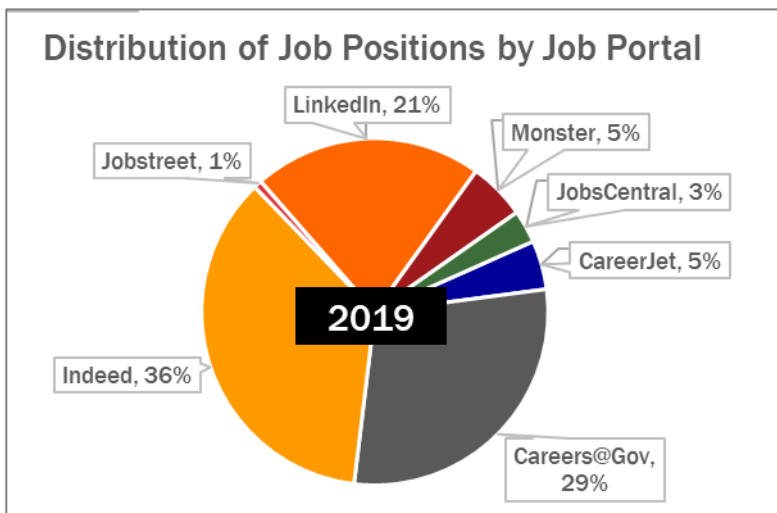
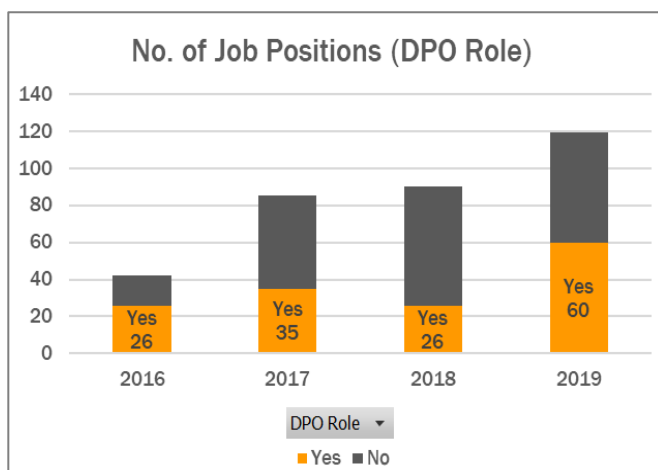| Job Portal	2019
Indeed	36%
Careers@Gov	29%
LinkedIn	21%
Monster	5%
CareerJet	5%
JobsCentral	3%
Jobstreet	1%
Grand Total	100%

For this research, only online job portals were used. The top three job portals that has the highest concentration of data protection positions are Indeed (36%), Careers@Gov (29%) and LinkedIn (21%).

3) **Number of Job Positions from 2016 to 2019 by Industry**

No. of Job Positions				
Industry	2016	2017	2018	2019
Public/Civil Service/Government		7	2	40
Banking & Financial Services	8	25	30	23
Information Technology	6	14	18	12
Business Services	18	14	22	11
Healthcare	1	11		11
NA				7
Industrial Goods & Services		1	5	5
Transportation Services			5	2
Consumer Goods & Services			2	2
Professional Services	1	2		2
Education Services	6	4	3	2
Non-profit Organisation	1	1		1
Travel & Leisure	1	1	2	1
Telecommunications		5	1	
Grand Total	42	85	90	119

The increased demand was driven mainly by the government, which accounted for 34% (40 out of 119) of the overall job vacancies advertised. This was followed by sectors in health, information technology and financial services which combined, accounted for 39% of the available job positions.

4) **Number of Job Positions from 2016 to 2019 (DPO Role)**

No. of Job Positions			
DPO Role	Yes	No	Total
2016	26	16	42
2017	35	50	85
2018	26	64	90
2019	60	59	119

There is an increasing trend of organisations hiring professionals to perform the role of a data protection officer. In fact, in 2019, 50% of job positions advertised specifically involved performing the role of a data protection officer.

5) **Number of Job Positions from 2016 to 2019 by Job Level**
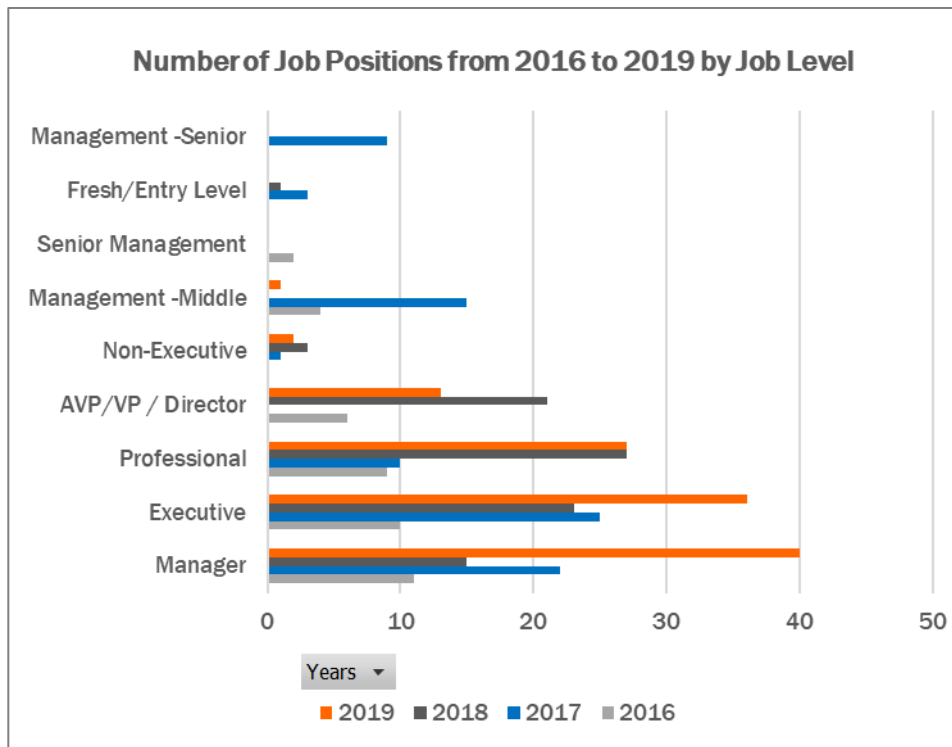
Job Level	2016	2017	2018	2019
Manager	11	22	15	40
Executive	10	25	23	36
Professional	9	10	27	27
AVP/VP / Director	6		21	13
Non-Executive		1	3	2
Management -Middle	4	15		1
Senior Management	2			
Fresh/Entry Level		3	1	
Management -Senior		9		
Grand Total	42	85	90	119

A large majority of the advertised job vacancies in the month of July 2019 are for executive (11%) and managerial positions (30%) , compared to a larger demand for AVP/VP / Director positions (23%) in 2018.

6) **Number of Job Positions from 2016 to 2019 by Job Functions**

No	Comparison			
Job Functions	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Information Technology	47.6%	41.2%	38.9%	44.5%
Legal & Compliance	14.3%	29.4%	27.8%	35.3%
General & Business	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	5.9%
Human Resources	7.1%	2.4%	1.1%	5.0%
Banking/Finance	0.0%	0.0%	4.4%	1.7%
Consulting	0.0%	2.4%	2.2%	1.7%
Business Development	2.4%	7.1%	14.4%	1.7%
Others	28.6%	17.6%	10.0%	4.2%
Grand Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

The two largest departments hiring data protection expertise include information technology (44.5%) and the legal and compliance (35.3%) department.